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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/825,358	04/16/2004	Fysh Dadd	COCH-0010-1	8101
30678 7590 06/19/2007 CONNOLLY BOVE LODGE & HUTZ LLP 1875 EYE STREET, N.W. SUITE 1100 WASHINGTON, DC 20036			EXAMINER STOKLOSA, JOSEPH A	
			ART UNIT 3762	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 06/19/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/825,358	Applicant(s) DADD ET AL.	
	Examiner Joseph Stoklosa	Art Unit 3762	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 5/14/2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-62 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 7, 18, 19, 22, 23 and 27 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6, 8-17, 20, 21, 24-26 and 28-62 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 5/14/2007 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claim 61 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Claim 61 lacks support in the specification of the "first material having relatively less stiffness than said second material." The specification supports a contradictory arrangement of the tip having less stiffness than the carrier body (see page 10, bottom paragraph).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 14-20, 24, 27-30, 32-35, 39, 45-49, 59-61, and 62 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Kuzma (US 6,119,044).

6. Kuzma discloses a device, comprising an elongate member including at least one electrode (see for example Figure 1, Abstract), and a tip member extending distally from a distal end of the elongate member (see for example Figure 4). The Kuzma reference also discloses the tip as comprising a distally tapered portion and a blunt end portion at a distal end of the tapered portion (see for example Figure 4), and further teaches of the tip member being resiliently flexible (see for example Abstract, col. 11 lines 39-42). It is noted that the device disclosed by Kuzma is inherently capable of resisting fold over of the tip when inserted into the cochlea due to the frusto-conical tapering of the electrode array and the smaller cross-sectional area at the proximal tip. Applicant does not claim the tip dimensions including length, radius, etc., therefore Examiner considers the portion disclosed in section L8 of Fig. 4 to be the tip, which is apparently geometrically incapable of folding over on itself.

7. In regards to claims 2, 8, 33-34, 39, Examiner takes the position that the tapered portion of the tip, as taught by Kuzma, is substantially frusto-conical in shape and tapers continuously down to the distal soft tip, where it is seen in Fig. 4 that the tip is tapered

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as well in that the diameter is decreased from the proximal end of L8 to a smaller diameter at the distal end of L8. (see for example Figures 4, 14).

8. In regards to claim 14, 45, Examiner takes the position that Kuzma teaches the tip member is capable of being integral with the elongate member (see for example Figure 15).

9. In regards to claim 15, 46, Kuzma teaches of the tip member being mounted on the distal end of the elongate member (see for example Figure 14).

10. In regards to claim 16, 47, Kuzma teaches of a tip member that includes a lumen therein (see for example Figure 14).

11. In regards to claims 17, 48, the Kuzma reference teaches of a device wherein the elongated member includes a lumen therein for allowing a stiffening element to be inserted through said elongate member and for allowing a distal end of said stiffening element to extend into said lumen in said tip member (see for example Figure 16 and Abstract).

12. Examiner interprets the lumen to extend through the carrier body and continue all the way to the distal tip, 37. Kuzma states the straightening stylet is inserted into the channel of the electrode array until the tip of the stylet reaches the distal tip, 14, of the array (Fig. 15, 14; Col. 8, line 1-6).

13. In regards to claim 20, 49, the Kuzma reference teaches of a system wherein the tip member inherently has a substantially uniform bending stress distribution in an axial direction, since the tip is of one material and circular and therefore has uniform bending stress (see for example Figure 4).

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14. With regard to claim 29-30, 59-61, Kuzma discloses a tip member (Fig. 4, 37) that is made of LSR-25 supported by the electrode array that is made of LSR-70 (Col. 11, line 22-50). LSR 25 and LSR-70 have substantially the same flexibility with LSR-70 being slightly stiffer.

15. Merriam Webster defines a cantilever as, "a projecting beam or member supported at only one end." Accordingly, the device disclosed by Kuzma sufficiently meets this limitation through the use of a stiffer carrier array body composed of LSR-70.

16. With regard to claim 62, Kuzma discloses the use of a stiffening device stylet (ABSTRACT).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

17. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

18. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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19. Claims 5, 6, 12, 13, 37, 38, 43, and 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Kuzma (U.S. Patent No. 6,119,044).

20. In regards to claim 5-6, and 37-38, Kuzma teaches of a barrel portion having a length (L8) that is 0.3 mm, which Examiner interprets as being about 0.4 mm. Similarly, in regards to claim 6, Kuzma teaches of the barrel portion having a diameter (L6) that is 0.6 mm, which Examiner interprets as being about 0.45 mm in diameter. Or in the alternative, Examiner takes the position that the dimensions of claims 5 and 6 would have been obvious modifications to system as taught by Kuzma.

21. In regards to claims 12-13 and 43-44, Examiner takes the position that the blunt end portion of the distal tip can be interpreted as part ellipsoidal or part spherical in shape (see for example Figure 6). Or in the alternative, Examiner takes the position that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the system as taught by Kuzma to include the limitations as specified in claims 12 and 13 to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the system.

22. Claims 4, 9, 10, 11, 21, 25 –26, 36, 40-42, 50-58, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuzma.

23. In regards to claims 4, 21, 25, 26, 36, 50, Kuzma does not specifically teach that the elongate member has a diameter greater than the diameter of tip member's barrel portion, Examiner takes the position that such a configuration is well known in the art. Further, although the Kuzma reference discloses the use of silicone rubber (see for example col. 10 lines 58-62), the reference does not specifically teach of the use of a

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liquid silicone; however, Examiner takes the position that the use of liquid silicone is well known in the art and a modification of the Kuzma reference to include liquid silicone would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, since it is known in the art to provide efficient and effective operation.

24. In regards to claims 9-11, 40-42, 51-58 (Examiner interprets the dimensions of claim 9 as the length of the tapered portion of the tip member) Examiner takes the position that although the Kuzma reference teaches of elongated tapered device, it does not specifically teach of the exact dimensional parameters as specified in claims; however, Examiner takes the position that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the system as taught by Kuzma with the dimensional parameters as specified in the claims, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233.

25. In regards to claim 31, Kuzma discloses the claimed invention, but fails to disclose an alignment indicator between the carrier body and the tip. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the system as taught by Kuzma, since such a modification would provide for ensuring clean mating between the tip and carrier body. Further Claim 31 is a product by process claim and Kuzma anticipates the final product.

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Response to Arguments

26. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-28 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection necessitated by amendment.

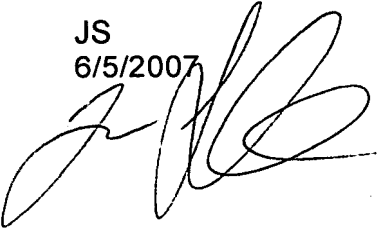
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph Stoklosa whose telephone number is 571-272-1213. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Angela Sykes can be reached on 571-272-4955. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Joseph Stoklosa
Examiner
Art Unit 3762

JS
6/5/2007




GEORGE R. EVANISKO
PRIMARY EXAMINER

6/9/07